



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

P.O. BOX 532711

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

April 7, 1999

Office of the Chief
Environmental Resources Branch

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CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER
QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
LOS ANGELES REGION

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed for your review and comment is a copy of the Draft Environmental Assessment/Mitigated Negative Declaration (EA/MND) for the Port of Hueneme Deep Draft Navigation Feasibility Study, in Ventura County, California. The Draft EA/MND is found in the green pages of the enclosed Feasibility Study report, Volume I.

The project purpose is to efficiently accommodate larger, deep-draft vessels, increase cargo efficiency of product delivery, and reduce overall transit costs. The draft EA/MND addresses the environmental impacts of alternatives to achieve this goal. Under the Recommended Plan, the Main Approach Channel would be deepened to -13.2 m MLLW, and the Entrance Channel, Turn Basin, Channel A, and Berthing Area would be deepened to -12.2 m MLLW. Approximately 485,000 m³ of dredged material would be disposed at Hueneme Beach. Proposed wharf modifications at berths 1-5 to stabilize the structures at the deeper berthing areas include replacing the existing timber fender system and adding a sheet pile toe wall.

No long-term unavoidable significant impacts are expected to result from implementation of the Recommended Plan. Construction is scheduled to occur during the winter months, thus avoiding impacts to Threatened, Endangered, and sensitive species and minimizing impacts to recreation. Mitigation will also be implemented during wharf modification to maintain short-term noise impacts at acceptable levels at the nearest residences.

The review period for this draft EA/MND is 30 days. Comments received on this document prior to the close of the review period will be incorporated into the final EA/MND. The Draft EA/MND will also be presented and discussed at the public meeting for the feasibility study to be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 21, 1999 at the Oxnard Harbor District. Oral comments on the Draft EA/MND may be presented at the public meeting. Directions to the public meeting and other pertinent information are provided in the enclosed Public Notice.

Written comments on the Draft EA/MND should be addressed to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District
Attn: Ms. Lois Goodman, CESPL-PD-RL
P.O. Box 532711
Los Angeles, California 90053-2325

If you have any questions regarding the draft EA/MND, please contact
Ms. Lois Goodman, Environmental Coordinator, Environmental Design Section, at
(213) 452-3869.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Koplín, P.E.
Chief, Planning Division

Enclosures



US Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District



Port of Hueneme
OXNARD HARBOR DISTRICT

Notice of Public Review and Public Meeting Port Hueneme Navigation Improvement Feasibility Study

Interested Parties:

This is an open invitation to all interested parties to provide views and comments on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' and the Oxnard Harbor District's plan for navigation improvements for the Port Hueneme Harbor in Port Hueneme, California. A public meeting on the study and the proposed harbor deepening plan will be held on April 21st at 7:00pm at the Oxnard Harbor District's Board Room, 333 Ponoma Street, Port Hueneme, California.

At the public meeting, the results of the draft feasibility study will be presented as well as the proposed plan which involves deepening the approach channel, entrance channel and inner harbor and placement of dredged material on and/or nearshore of Hueneme Beach, located just south of the harbor. The Draft Environmental Assessment on this plan will also be presented and discussed. The draft Feasibility Report, Environmental Assessment and Technical Appendices are available for public review at the Ray D. Prueter Library, 510 Park Ave., Port Hueneme, California and the Oxnard City Library, 251 South A St., Oxnard, California. A summary of the study results and a complete description of the Recommended Plan and Environmental Impacts are included in this announcement.

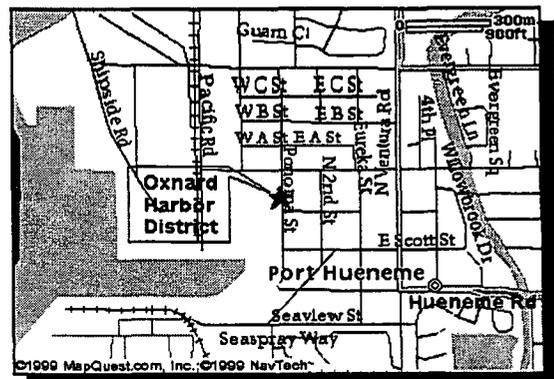
The purpose of this public meeting is to solicit public comments and concerns with respect to the draft feasibility study findings and the proposed Recommended Plan. All comments and information received will be carefully reviewed and fully considered in reaching the final feasibility study conclusions and recommendations. Therefore, we urge all interested parties to participate. Anyone wishing to express their views at the meeting will be offered a full opportunity to do so. In addition, written comments may be submitted at the meeting or mailed to the Corps of Engineers at the address below. A record of proceedings will be taken during the meeting and a transcript prepared. All statements, oral or written, will become part of the official record of the study. Appropriate statements or recommendations for change will be incorporated into the final study documents.

The review period for receiving views and comments is 30 days. All written statements should be received by the Corps no later than May 6, 1999. Written comments or further information regarding the Port of Hueneme feasibility study or the public meeting can be addressed to Mr. Robert Blasberg, Study Manager, Coastal Resources Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California, 90053-2325. Mr. Blasberg may also be reached by telephone at (213) 452-3836.

We have attempted to send this information to all individuals and organizations who may have an interest in the Port of Hueneme. If you know of individuals who may desire to attend and have not been contacted by us, please bring this invitation to their attention.

Directions to Meeting:

From US 101: Exit Las Posas Rd. Head south on Las Posas to Hueneme Rd. Turn right on Hueneme Rd. Head west to Ventura Rd. Turn right on Ventura Rd and head north to Scott St. Turn left on Scott St. and head west to Ponoma St. Turn right on Ponoma St. to Oxnard Harbor District Office. (333 Ponoma Street)



THE PORT OF HUENEME DRAFT FEASIBILITY REPORT PROJECT SUMMARY

Authority and Purpose

The Port of Hueneme Feasibility Study was authorized by a June 10, 1992 Resolution of the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the House of Representatives. The Port of Hueneme Feasibility Study was conducted to investigate the feasibility and economic justification of modifying the existing Federal Project to improve navigation and meet the projected navigation needs of the Port.

The feasibility study was conducted in accordance with all applicable Federal Water Resources laws and policies, and is consistent with all U. S. Army Corps of Engineers regulations, policies and guidelines relating to the conduct of Federal harbor and navigation feasibility studies.

Study Participants

The feasibility study was prepared by the Los Angeles District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in coordination with the Oxnard Harbor District. Coordination was also conducted with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), California Coastal Commission (CCC), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), local municipalities and other interested parties. The Non-Federal Sponsor of this project is the Oxnard Harbor District.

Problem Description

A deepening project at the port is necessary to accommodate fully loaded, Panamax-sized vessels, thereby improving the efficiency of existing and future cargo movements. Handy-sized bulk carriers and tankers, like the ones currently calling on the port (wood pulp, liquid fertilizer carriers), have fully loaded drafts of up to 10.7 meters (35 feet). However, since the fleet of handy-sized vessels are getting older and less efficient, some of the port's customers have expressed a desire to utilize larger, Panamax-sized ships for their trade routes to the Port of Hueneme. Currently, Panamax-sized tankers or bulk carriers with fully loaded drafts of up to 40 feet (12.2 meters) must be sufficiently light loaded to call at Port Hueneme Harbor, even with the use of tides. This light-loading and tidal delay will result in inefficient cargo movements at the Port of Hueneme in the future.

Plan Formulation

Plan formulation considered the Planning Objectives of improving navigation at the Port and preserving and enhancing environmental resources. An array of both structural and non-structural alternatives were considered and evaluated based on their capability of meeting the Planning Objectives. Through a process of screening out alternatives, channel deepening was considered most viable to allow deeper draft vessels to call on the Port.

The formulation of the final alternatives considered the optimization of channel depths to maximize net annualized National Economic Development (NED) benefits. This included channel requirements for the safe transit of the design vessel; characteristics and quality of the dredged material required for disposal; and the alternative methods of disposal, including the potential for beach nourishment.

The final alternatives were evaluated based on comparisons to the No Action Plan and contributions to National Economic Development (NED) and environmental impacts to determine compliance with environmental laws, policies and other guidelines. The plan selected is the NED Plan.

Recommended Plan

The Recommended Plan is divided into two parts; the General Navigation Features (GNF) and the Associated Features (AF). The GNF part consists of deepening the existing Federal approach channel to a depth of 43.3 feet (-13.2 meters) MLLW and deepening the entrance channel, turning basin and Channel "A" to 40 feet (12.2 meters) MLLW. The AF part consists of deepening berths 1 and 5 to 40 feet (12.2 meters) MLLW and modifying the entrance channel wharf and portions of wharves 1 and 2. All dredged material will be disposed of on or nearshore of Hueneme Beach located just south of Channel "A". **Figure 1** displays the Recommended Plan harbor improvements. The annualized cost of the proposed plan totals \$593,000. Annual economic benefits of the plan total \$1,541,000 yielding a benefit-to-cost ratio of 2.6 to 1.

Environmental Impacts of the Recommended Plan

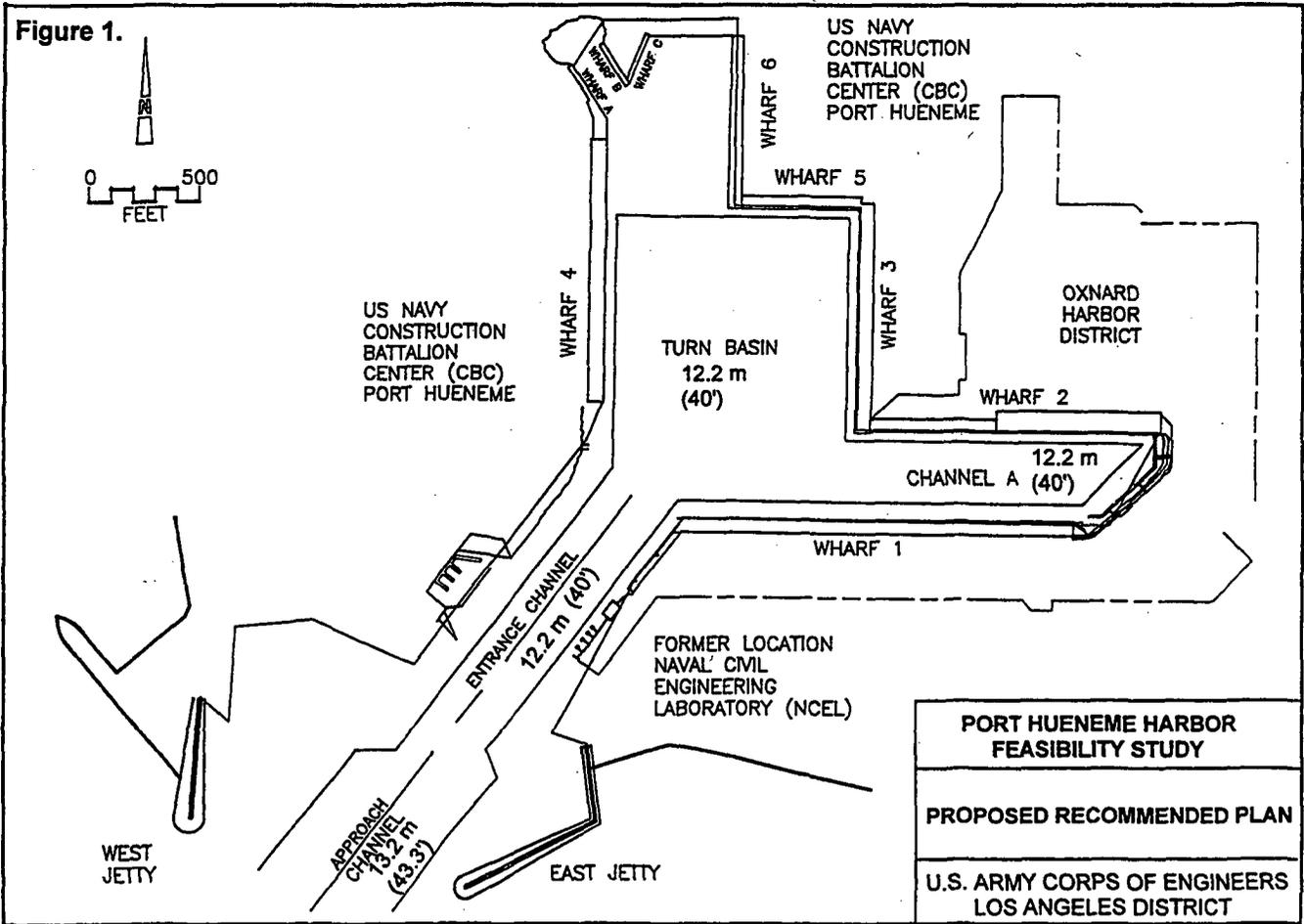
The environmental impacts and mitigation plans associated with the Recommended Plan are presented in detail in the Environmental Assessment (EA) included in the Feasibility Report. Environmental impacts were evaluated for the dredge site and the potential placement sites. There are no long-term unavoidable significant impacts resulting from implementation of the Recommended Plan. The only significant unavoidable impacts would be a short-term impact on noise during construction. All other resources addressed in the EA would experience either adverse but insignificant impacts or no impact during construction. Due to potential biological concerns related with the presence of grunion being onsite for a portion of the year, construction activities have been planned to occur during the time when these species are not present, between October 1 and March 1. This construction window also applies to Federally listed least terns and snowy plovers. To avoid the potential impacts to the Pismo clam, onshore dredged material placement will be above +0 feet (+0 meters) MLLW and nearshore placement will be below -10 feet (-3.0 meters) MLLW. This method has been used successfully during past maintenance dredging episodes. This placement technique is not expected to have an impact on the cost of the proposed project. With implementation of the above plan, significant impacts are not expected to the local Pismo clam populations.

Plan Implementation Requirements

The District Engineer's recommendation proposes to implement the project under Section 107 of the Corps' Continuing Authorities Program since the total Federal construction costs are less than \$4,000,000 which is the limit of this authority. Implementing the project under the Continuing Authorities Program will enable the District to initiate Plans and Specifications immediately following Headquarters, Corps of Engineers' approval of the final Feasibility Report/EA. In addition, it would also expedite the construction timetable since no specific Congressional authorization would be required.

The Oxnard Harbor District as the Non-Federal Sponsor will be required to pay during the period of construction 25 percent of the cost of construction of the General Navigation Features, and 100% of the cost of construction of the Associated Features for an estimated total first cost to the Non-Federal Sponsor of \$4,990,000. In addition, the Oxnard Harbor District will be required to pay an estimated \$410,000 or 10 percent of the total cost of construction of the general navigation features of the NED Plan plus interest over a period not to exceed 30 years following completion of construction. Costs borne by the local sponsor for lands, easements, rights-of-way, and material disposal areas may be credited toward this required payment. The estimated total project cost to the Non-Federal Sponsor is \$5,400,000.

Figure 1.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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COASTAL RESOURCES BRANCH
P.O. BOX 532711
LOS ANGELES, CA 90053-2325

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